

Tsunami!

Safety Tips for the Washington Coast!



Evacuation Map for Port Townsend and Vicinity

A tsunami is a series of waves most commonly caused by an earthquake beneath the sea floor.

If a large earthquake displaces the sea floor near the Washington Coast, the first waves may reach the outer coast minutes after the ground stops shaking. There would be no time for authorities to issue a warning. This tsunami would reach Port Townsend in about 2-1/4 hours.

Following an earthquake far out in the Pacific Ocean it may take hours for tsunami waves to reach the Washington Coast. The West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Center alerts local officials who may order evacuation, but isolated areas may not receive official announcements. If you notice a sudden drop or rise in sea level, it may be a warning of impending danger. Move to high ground or inland immediately.

The waves can kill and injure people and cause great property damage where they come ashore. The first wave is often not the largest; successive waves may be spaced many minutes apart and continue to arrive for several hours.

What is a tsunami?

Where do tsunamis occur?
Tsunamis can occur at any time of the day or night, under any and all weather conditions, and in all seasons. Beaches open to the ocean, by bay entrances or tidal flats, and the shores of coastal rivers are especially vulnerable to tsunamis.

How do I know when to evacuate?
A strong off-shore earthquake may generate a tsunami. Therefore, if you feel the ground shake, evacuate inland or to high ground immediately and return only after officials say it is safe to do so.
During distant source tsunami events, local Emergency Management officials will advise citizens to evacuate by making an announcement. Monitor your NOAA Weather Radio or keep a local radio and/or TV station on for information and emergency instructions.

Where do I evacuate?

Go to an area 50 feet above sea level, if possible. If you don't have time to travel to high ground, but are in a multi-story building, go to an upper level of the home or building. If you are on the beach and unable to get to high ground go inland as far as you can. The tsunami evacuation map illustrates the primary evacuation routes and assembly areas. Take your disaster supply kit with you.

CONTACTS

State Emergency Management
A Division of Washington Military Department
at (800) 562-6108, or visit our
Web site at: www.emd.wa.gov
Mailing address:
Camp Murray
Washington 98430-5122



For information regarding emergency and disaster preparedness in Jefferson County, please contact:

Jefferson County
Dept. of Emergency Management
Phone: (360) 385-3831, press 7,
during office hours
Email: jcdem@co.jefferson.wa.us
Web: www.jcdem.co.jefferson.wa.us/
Mailing address:
Jefferson County Department of
Emergency Management
81 Elkins Road
Port Hadlock, WA 98339

What is the difference between a Watch and a Warning?
A watch means conditions are favorable for something to happen. A warning means it is going to happen.
Remember:
■ Never go to the coast to watch a tsunami. Tsunamis move faster than a person can run. If you are camping on or near the beach, you may have to abandon your campsite to go inland or to higher ground to save your life.
■ Do not return to shore after the first wave. Wait for Emergency Management officials to give the "All Clear" before you return.
■ If you see an unexpected rise or fall in the coastal water, a tsunami may be approaching. Do not wait — instead move inland or uphill as quickly as possible.
■ Stay tuned to your radio, marine radio or NOAA Weather Radio during a disaster. Bulletins will be issued regularly through local Emergency Management officials and National Weather Service.
■ Call 9-1-1 only for life threatening emergencies.

What should I do if an earthquake occurs while at the coast?
1. Drop, cover and hold. Get under a sturdy object and hold on. Watch for falling objects.
2. As soon as the shaking is over, move to high ground or inland. Do not wait for an official warning.
3. Stay away from the coast. Waves may continue to arrive for hours.
4. Listen to your local radio station for an official "All Clear" notice before returning to the coastal area.
5. Be alert for aftershocks.

What can I do to protect myself from a tsunami?
■ Develop a family disaster plan. Everyone needs to know what to do on their own to protect themselves from an earthquake.
■ Be familiar with local Emergency Management earthquake and tsunami plans. Know where to go to survive a tsunami.
■ Be prepared to survive on your own for a minimum of three days.
■ Prepare a disaster supply kit for your home, automobile and work. A list of recommended supplies for your kit appears on the inside of this brochure.
■ Take a first aid course and learn survival skills. Knowledge is your greatest defense against potential disaster.